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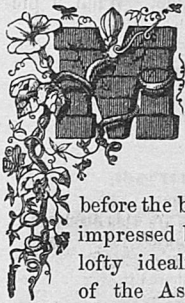
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## LET ALL SPEAK.



Y friend, is this the image of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ?" said a visitor at the Gallery, to a stranger, as he stood before the bust of Apollo, evidently impressed by its calm dignity and lofty ideality. The attendants of the Association evidently regarded the inquiry as one of the jokes of the season; but, to us, it was a noble tribute to the power of the sculptor. Ignorant as the visitor was of Art and its attributes, he yet had a susceptible mind, and his study of the bust led him to detect, if not its real character, at least its *language*, and in this he was a critic whose judgment was entitled to respect.

It is told of Mordaunt, that once having painted a barn-yard scene, he called in his Lancashire out-of-doors man to get his opinion. "Very well," said the untutored fellow; "but whoever seed a lot o' hogs eatin' without one or more havin' a foot in the trough?" The hint was immediately adopted, and the artist acknowledged himself indebted greatly to *such* criticism for the spirit of many of his pictures.

We are all too apt to disregard the opinions of those we deem inferior to us in cultivation and acquirements. If we ask a person's judgment, it is of one we regard as capable of a better estimate than ourselves; but in Art, as in Literature, it is not the highly educated sense that always appreciates best. When Defoe called together his household, and made the women and children criticise his labors, he passed the severest ordeal: if they were pleased, if they were deeply absorbed in the narrative, he well knew his work was successful, and so gave it to the world. If, like Defoe, many of our artists would submit to hear the expression of unbiassed and truthful minds, many an incongruity would be avoided—many a grace added.

We once knew a portrait-painter who fell in love with a girl having large hazel eyes, heavy lashes, waving hair, and a dimpled chin. Forthwith he fell to painting large eyes upon every canvas; and whether his sitter had pig or polar eyes, it was all one to him—they *must be*, according to "true Art," depicted large and full;

only thus could the face be rendered impressive. So set did this annoying mannerism become, that he would get angered if any person sought to reason him out of it. Finally, a brother artist resorted to ridicule to rid him of the fatal proclivity. Going into the studio, he found a nearly finished face, exquisitely done, but with the inevitable big eyes. It was but the work of a moment for the visitor to seize the palette, and, upon the same canvas, beside the beautiful face, to paint a large owl's head, having eyes which were a perfect counterpart of those of the portrait. The whole contrast was very ludicrous, and the burlesque admirable. The work done, the visitor escaped, to learn that the artist returned to the studio with his lady sitter to find his dream of "large, expressive eyes" all undone.

It is thus that some artists become addicted to certain characteristics which no reason can banish from their minds. It only remains for their patrons to effect a reformation, by refusing the picture marred by such peculiarities.

Another class of artists there is who, seizing upon some hobby of the schools, ride it in season and out of season, until they become mere walking, talking, working agents of some defunct idea of the "old masters." It is well enough, of course, to study Art when anything can be learned; but to bolt down a Dusseldorf Gallery, and swear *that* is Heaven, is indicative of a loss of all originality and independence in the mere imitator's office. We have a case in point. A young painter, of our acquaintance, gave promise at fourteen, of becoming a noble artist. At sixteen, he commanded money enough to go abroad for study, and spent three years, thereafter, in Europe. He returned home a mere copyist, having utterly lost his individuality in his worship of Dusseldorfs. To this day, he *copies* beautifully; but *dares not* attempt anything fresh, original, speaking. He scorns "vulgar effects," "popular ideas," "Turner touches," and in his admiration for High Art, paints away, day by day, on the very ghost of a subject, casting aside, as unworthy, the great world of passion and feeling around him, which is almost crying out for reproduction on canvas. What a sad comment on "going abroad for study!"

Every man's opinion is entitled, if not to respect, at least to a patient hearing; and the artist who is impatient at contra-

diction, is just as much at fault as the writer who will only consider one side of an argument. The only way to progress in science, is to profit by the work of those gone before; and so of literature and of painting—both have a broad field for observation, and many eyes, and pens, and pencils, are necessary to canvass the whole field. He who is a bigot, and hears no advice, scorns others' experience, is not fitted to advance from his own very limited domain. While we deprecate a loss of individuality—a want of perfect confidence in personal power—we yet would guard against an egotism which is blindness. To see all, and hear all, and then to properly adapt the suggestions to his own taste and genius, is the wise part of every true worker. An artist, now dead, alas! sent us several pictures which the Committee rejected as too crude and coarse. He was quite indignant at the assumption of any "outsider"—"what did a mere connoisseur know of the mysteries and principles of Art?"—"what did the Committee know of *his* mind?" If the artist only knew how ridiculous his egotism made him, he would have been even more mortified than at the rejection of his pictures.

A lady of our acquaintance once reprimanded us for some observation upon female attire. "What do you men know of what is fit and proper for woman?" said she. Here was that same egotism, for which she would have condemned the poor artist. Men know very much of the proprieties of the female garb, just as much as the fair sex know of fitness in the male attire. If the modern lady outrages all laws of good taste, in compassing herself with hoops, surely the criticism of the newsboy, who cried: "Here's your 'Erald, three cents; news from Europe, and the woman who was lost—hoop!" is something quite as legitimate as though a woman had said "her sister was lost in hoops." All classes have more or less sagacity in detecting appropriateness in dress, in equipage, in decoration, in style generally, and the strictures of the street are as full of philosophy as one of Reynolds' Art disquisitions. The lady who presumes upon ignoring the taste of men in her dress, might, with equal propriety, ignore their taste in all matters of ornament and Art. Dress is an Art, or rather, one of the Fine Arts, in more ways than one; and, since it has so become, woman must submit to criticism



and stricture as severe and familiar as that which is meted out to the artist whose business it is to deal in fictitious representation.

We have a friend, who, as an Architect, has won a just celebrity. But he is so set in his own views of the "proprieties of the Orders," of the "requisites of the design," that he allows no man to interfere with his plans, nor to modify his specifications. When a builder comes to him for a draught, the architect expressly stipulates that the design shall be carried out in detail, else he will have nothing to do with it. Now, this is *not* right. Suppose we were to say, simply because our taste runs to landscape, that not a face, nor a bust, nor a medallion, should be admitted to the Gallery—would we not be open to censure, and justly so? The taste of all has a right to recognition, and it must be consulted, so far as it is not vulgar nor perverse. The architect should not compromise Orders, and sacrifice symmetry and beauty to the whims of the owner; but he should adopt such modifications as the owner may suggest, which are in good taste. Thus doing, he gives variety to his structures; and each house, instead of being the straight and prim model from "the books," will have, with its unity, variety, and beauty, peculiarly its own, and thus add an additional grace to the street. Our friend, "the intractable," as we call him, never can build a house for us: for if we don't know much about architecture in detail, we yet have a taste and likes which must be respected in any tenement of our own.

The philosophy deducible from all this is plain. It teaches to arrogate to ourselves no entire supremacy; but to be considerate of all opinion, all sympathy, all taste, and to seek for the Good and True in whatever quarter it may be found. God has implanted in almost every breast that sense of fitness which teaches adaptation in all things; and though study and a large experience may improve the power of that sense, and enlarge its sphere of criticism, they may, after all, be inferior in the perception of truth to the untutored instincts of the Lancashire clod-breaker, or to the unbiased judgment of the child. A truly *cosmopolitan* philosophy is sure to render us all wiser, better, more genial in our brotherhoods, and more likely to attain to the great ends of all Art and all Nature—Truth and Beauty here and hereafter.

## WONDERFUL PICTURES.



CANVAS has told many a wonderful tale; and the rhyme of the poet has rendered immortal many a history which else had gone to the nothingness of things forgotten. But, though the imagination of the Art-devotee is vividly alive at the contemplation of the master-works, and occasionally gives the world fitting embodiment to its thought, there are unpainted dramas more wild and magical than Art can reproduce; and it is left for words alone to catch the scenes, and give them faint utterance ere they pass from sight and memory forever.

When Arthur Cleveland Coxe penned his "March"—

"March—march—march,  
Making sounds as they tread,  
Ho-ho! how they step  
Going down to the dead,"

he raised the veil, and betrayed to our startled gaze such a picture as ne'er had a name on canvas; and the artist, in vain, will try to coin such thought upon expression. So of the "Blue-beard Chambers of the Heart," by E. Spencer Miller:—what palette can catch the shadows and voices of that spectral poem!

Waken not those whispers,  
They will pain your ears;  
Waken not the dust that deepens  
Through the solemn years,—  
Deepens in the silence,  
Deepens in the dark;  
Covering closer, as it gathers,  
Many a fearful mark.

Hist! the spectres gather,  
Break and group again,  
Wreathing, writhing, gibbering,  
Round that fearful stain;  
Blood upon the pannels,  
Blood upon the floor,  
Blood that baffles wear and washing,  
Red for evermore!

Ah! this is a fearful picture, and no cunning hand may catch its presence. It will live alone in the poet's pen.

Shall we also name the "Conquering Worm" of the wierd, unhappy Poe? It is too horrible for record; and it is well no color, nor light and shadow can gather its mimes rout.

The "Phantom Field," by a less known author, published in Graham's Magazine for 1852, is another less revolting creation, though still as far beyond the power of

human hand to call into life upon the canvas as the ghostly and shadowy realms of the spirit world are intangible. What a picture is here!

"O keen the wind and cold the air,  
That sweeps above the plain!  
Yet must the empty coffins bear  
The skeletons again."

"Over the silent field they haste,  
To gather limb and bone:  
Though skulls and limbs are wide displaced  
Each coffin knows its own."

"Soon every limb is gathered in,  
Soon every lid is fast;  
And falling into rank again  
They turn towards the East."

"But when another year is fled,  
When comes St. Stephen's night,  
The death's-heads shall unloose their dead  
Unconfined for the fight."

It is not for canvas that such pictures are, and, therefore, must they only be sketched, limned by the more daring pen.

But, all such *written* creations are not drawn out into the light, for the wonder of the poet and the fear of the superstitious. Even in our closely kept repository of secret things, we have what stranger eyes have not been permitted to scan; and some may not see the light, though they are wonderful indeed. This one letter, however, is before us now, and we may be permitted to give it to these pages, since it may have passed even from the memory of the writer himself. Was it the supernal sense that called up such association? else, surely, the Mind was hovering upon the confines of insanity. We read—

"—, July 20, 1853.

"—: I wish that you would visit this city. I have a palace, here, that is very high. From it I have a view of two worlds: they are both very beautiful. I have with me a very dear little friend When I look from my window out upon the little lake, she is kneeling and looking attentively at the lake and at me. When I stand by the battlements, and look at the stars, she has climbed up by my side, and the stars twinkle through her fair locks. She is very little and childlike; for she has not learned the ways of the world.

"I never speak to her, though she talks all the day long. Her silvery voice, so sweet, so clear, is the very stillness of these halls. Her discourse, like murmuring music, does not interrupt my thought.

"There is no glare of greatness here, to oppress me. Thought and fancy are not means to an end. This lovely place is very suitable to one trying to become good.

"There is a choice library here, and paintings that you could not tire to look upon. There is one picture in the upper gallery—it is alone, in the upper gallery! If you would like to see it, 'tis hanging at the east end. It is sometimes very dark at that end of the long hall. Sometimes, in the day-time, it gets quite dark, and you cannot see the picture.